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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE CHRIST,

BASED ON LUKE.

BY WILLIAM R. HARPER AND GEORGE S. GOODSPEED,

YALE UNIVERSITY.

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STUDIES XXIX. AND XXX.—THE PEOPLE AND THE KINGDOM OF
GOD.—LUKE 12 : 54–13 : 21.

Remark.—It is desirable that in beginning each “study” the entire passage assigned be read over rapidly and the main divisions of the narrative noted.

I. EXAMINATION OF THE MATERIAL.

[It will be noted that the following order is observed invariably in this work ; (1) the verse or section is read and its contents stated in a general way ; (2) important or difficult words and phrases are studied ; (3) a complete statement of the contents of the verse or section is formed in view of the work already done ; (4) the religious teaching is sought.]

§ 1. Chapter 12 : 54–59.

1. Read the passage, note the subject suggested : *The Multitude warned.*
2. The following words and phrases call for study : (1) *in the west* (12 : 54), why in that quarter ? (2) *heat* (12 : 55), (a) cf. margin, (b) why from the south ? (3) *hypocrites* (12 : 56), (a) like Pharisees, (b) led by them ; (4) *interpret*, lit. “test” ; (5) *this time*, (a) when the Christ is present, (b) as the signs would show ; (6) *of yourselves* (12 : 57), out of your own observation and thought apart from either (a) the signs, (b) the Pharisees, your leaders, (c) Jesus’ teaching ; (7) *judge*, “determine” and consequently perform ; (8) *for* (12 : 58), i. e. this is the time to decide and do, “for” ; (9) *adversary*, (a) does this refer to God, Christ, the law, or (b) is it merely part of the drapery of the parable which teaches one great truth ?
3. A condensed statement of the thought should be based on the three divisions of the passage : (1) vs. 54, 55, 56, (2) v. 57, (3) vs. 58, 59. The student may make the statement after studying these divisions.
4. The teaching of the section lies in (1) the necessity for decision on religious matters, (2) the urgent need of immediate decision when the Christ is present.

§ 2. Chapter 13 : 1-5.

1. The subject may be stated as : *A lesson of Repentance.*
2. Important words and phrases are : (1) *told him* (13 : 1), i. e. since he had been speaking about punishment (12 : 58, 59); (2) *were sinners*, etc., (13 : 2), could Jesus have been addressing Galileans? (3) *in like manner* (13 : 3), either (a) by the sword, or (b) by the Roman hostility, or (c) violently, in punishment, or (d) as certainly; (4) *think ye*, etc., (13 : 4), did they not think so?
3. The thought of the passage is briefly stated as follows : *When told of the cruel slaughter of worshipping Galileans, he replied, Neither they nor those crushed by the tower in Siloam were therefore great sinners, but you too shall so perish unless you repent.*
4. The religious teaching here gathers about the need that *all* who hear the call of the Christ should turn to him in repentance.

§ 3. Chapter 13 : 6-9.

1. Read and note the subject : *The worthless Fig tree.*
2. Study the following : (1) *in his vineyard*; (2) *vinedresser*; (3) *three years*; (4) *cut it down*; (5) *cumber*; (6) *this year*.
3. The passage condensed may be as follows : *He told them the parable of the worthless fig tree which the owner commanded to be cut down. But the keeper secured a year's delay in which by working with it he hoped to get fruit.*
4. The student may consider carefully the religious thought in the passage.

§ 4. Chapter 13 : 10-17.

1. Is not the subject, *A Work of Healing on the Sabbath*?
2. The following words and phrases are of special interest : (1) *spirit of infirmity* (13 : 11), (a) cf. 13 : 16, (b) how explain this case of possession? (2) *saw her* (13 : 12), what may be inferred as to her state of mind from her presence there? (3) *said to the multitude* (13 : 14), (a) why not to Jesus? (b) censure upon the woman as well as Jesus? (4) *hypocrites* (13 : 15), why plural? (5) *his ox*, (a) as the law was interpreted to allow, (b) argument from lower to higher; (6) *multitude rejoiced* (13 : 17), recalls the Galilean ministry.
3. Criticise the following statement of thought : *While teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath he heals a deformed woman. The ruler angrily bids the people be healed on some other day, but Jesus replies, You loose and water your cattle on this day, why not let this daughter of Abraham go free from Satan's bond? Thus he shamed the opposers and delighted the people.*
4. Is it not taught here that an undue exaltation of the letter of religion may lead to positive opposition to its true spirit and best expression?

§ 5. Chapter 13 : 18-21.

1. The student, after reading, may state this subject.
2. Important words and phrases are : (1) *therefore* (13 : 18), how connect this with preceding section? (2) *whereunto shall I liken*, a common formula of Jewish teachers; (3) *his own garden* (13 : 19), peculiar to Luke's account; (4) *three measures* (13 : 21), is this (a) merely the usual quantity, or (b) symbolic of man's threefold nature, or (c) symbolic of the three great races of man?

3. The following condensation is suggested : *In view of the healing of the woman and its results, he said, The Kingdom of God, like the mustard tree, will grow from small beginnings into great size. Like the leaven hid in meal it will pervade and transform the world.*
4. The student may thoughtfully consider the religious teaching of the passage.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF THE MATERIAL,

1. Contents and Summary.

- 1) **The Contents.** The following table of contents is to be mastered.

THE PEOPLE AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- § 1. THE MULTITUDE WARNED.
- § 2. A LESSON OF REPENTANCE.
- § 3. THE WORTHLESS FIG TREE.
- § 4. A WORK OF HEALING ON THE SABBATH.
- § 5. THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM ILLUSTRATED.

- 2) **The Summary.** The student may prepare the summary on methods already suggested and illustrated.

2. Observations upon the Material.

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| <p>212) 12: 54-56. Jesus argues that the signs of the coming of the Kingdom of God are as clear as well-known weather signs.*</p> <p>213) 12: 57. The people do not exercise their own strong sense of what God would have them do.†</p> <p>214) 12: 54, 55, 58, 59. The intimation is that there are difficulties gathering about the nation which ought to be foreseen and avoided.</p> <p>215) 13: 1, 2. This conversation would seem to have occurred out of Galilee.</p> <p>216) 13: 1, 2. The inference is that these men were rather pleased with the slaughter of these Galileans.‡</p> | <p>217) 13: 3, 5. Jesus lays emphasis not on the wrong idea that the Jews had of the relation of calamity to sin but on the universal liability of all to calamity unless they repented.</p> <p>218) 13: 7. This parable seems to teach that God had long been seeking the fruit of obedience from the nation in vain, and that their continued existence depended on this fruitfulness.</p> <p>219) 13: 6-9. The parable is one of judgment.§</p> <p>220) 13: 7. A hint is given of God's larger possessions among men outside of the nation. </p> |
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* Since they were capable of distinguishing the face of the sky . . . it could only be from a lack of good-will that they left wholly unnoticed the rain and the vital warmth which in these days had been imparted in the Kingdom of God. *Van O.*, p. 208.

† He still hopes that their own sound sense of right may teach them the truth. But this could only be the case, if they got rid of the influence of their pharisaic leaders, whose alienation from His religio-ethical ideal made it impossible for them to be reached by any demand for a profound internal regeneration. . . . It was Jesus' constant endeavor to separate the people from their leaders, *Weiss*, III., 147.

‡ Very probably these Galileans were thus ruthlessly murdered because of their real or suspected connection with the nationalist movement, of which Galilee was the focus. It was as if these Jews had said to Jesus: Yes, signs of the times and of the coming storm! These Galileans of yours, your own countrymen, involved in a kind of Pseudo-Messianic movement, a kind of "signs of the times rising," something like that towards which you want us to look—was not their death a condign punishment? This latter inference they did not express in words, but implied in their narration of the fact. *Edersheim*, II., p. 222. ab. ed., p. 363.

§ The obvious purpose of the parable is to enforce the warning: "Except you repent," etc.; to intimate, that is to say, that the judgment of the Jewish nation was impending. *Bruce, Parabol. Teaching*, p. 428.

|| The parable before us is one of those parts of our Lord's teaching in which is latent universalism. . . . We see in it an anticipation of Paul's apologetic for his Gentile Gospel, as apparently liable to the objection of setting aside the election of Israel. *Bruce, ibid.*, p. 429.

221) 13: 10, 17. Jesus has entered upon a popular ministry in Perea.*

222) 13: 14-16. The opposition of the authorities and the replies of Jesus seem to be more pronounced and intense than in the earlier controversies.

223) 13: 14. The reply of the synagogue ruler is a testimony to the reality of the mira-

cle.

224) 13: 11, 16. The woman seems to be regarded as a victim of demoniacal possession.†

225) 13: 18. Jesus saw in the preceding work and its accompanying circumstances an illustration of the growth of the Kingdom both mightily and quietly.

3. Topics for Study.

Some of the most important and related "observations" are collected and organized here for further study.

1) **Signs of the Times.** [Obs. 212-214, 217, 218, 225]: (1) Consider the possibly close relation of the teaching in Lk. 12: 54-59 to 11: 29-36. (2) Observe the general thought—the signs existing are sufficient but are overlooked. (3) Enumerate them, ‡ e. g. (a) John's work, (b) the teaching of Jesus, (c) the political situation, (d) social life. (4) Determine now carefully just what these signs meant. (5) Note the predicted consequences of the neglect of these signs to the nation. (6) Inquire into the realization of (a) that which the signs portended, (b) the result of the national neglect of the signs.

4. Religious Teaching.

Is not the dominating religious thought of this passage that of a *message to dull hearts*? (1) they ought to recognize the meaning of events around them which are calling on them to repent and be reconciled to God (12: 54-13: 5); (2) they will surely be destroyed if they do not do God's will (13: 6-9); (3) they are making the spirit of God's law inoperative while they exalt the letter (13: 14-16); (4) the Kingdom of God will move on in spite of them (13: 18-21).

STUDIES XXXI. AND XXXII.—THE OUTLOOK FOR THE KINGDOM.

LUKE 13: 22-14: 35.

Remark.—It is desirable that in beginning each "study" (1) the material of the preceding "study" be reviewed, and (2) the entire passage assigned be read over rapidly and the main divisions of the narrative noted.

* Although Galilee had been abandoned by Him, and Jerusalem had been repeatedly hostile, we infer from Matt. 19: 2, that he was still heard with gladness in Perea; in fact, some such wave of popularity must have preceded the entry into Jerusalem. Riddle, *Luke*, p. 210.

† In the case of the infirm woman we seem to be on the debatable borderland between ordinary diseases and the peculiar class denominated demoniacal. Bruce, *Miraculous Element*, p. 180. Satan is referred to in general terms as the head of the kingdom of evil, physical as well as moral, and no inference may be drawn as to the woman's past habits and character. *Ibid.*, p. 172. We mark that hers was not demoniac possession at all—and yet, though she had not yielded, she had not effectually resisted and so she was "bound" by a "spirit of infirmity," both in body and soul. *Edersheim*, II., 224 (365).

‡ See *Pulpit Com.*, I., pp. 339, 340.